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Bureau of Mun. Research
(New York, N.Y.)

Proposals submitted by
the Bureau of Municipal...

New York

1908

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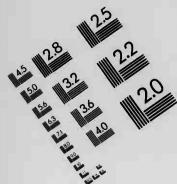
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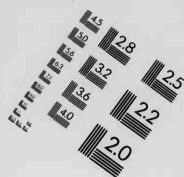
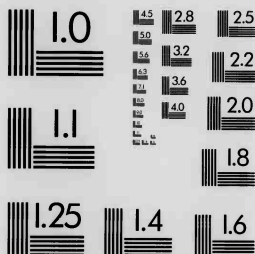
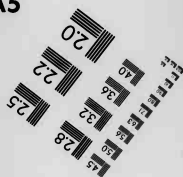
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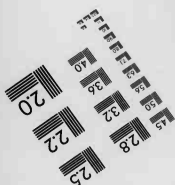


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PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF
MUNICIPAL RESEARCH TO THE BOARD
OF ESTIMATE AND APPORTIONMENT
FOR CONSIDERATION BEFORE
PASSING THE BUDGET
OF 1909

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

NEW YORK CITY

October 9, 1908

October 9, 1908.

Hon. GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Mayor,
Chairman, Board of Estimate and Apportionment,
New York City, N. Y.

DEAR SIR :

We beg to submit herewith a memorandum relating to certain matters bearing in an important way on the budget for the city of New York for the year 1909. We respectfully request your careful attention to the proposals presented in this memorandum, and urge favorable action thereon by your Board.

Respectfully submitted,

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH
by HENRY BRUÈRE, *Director*
FREDERICK A. CLEVELAND,
Technical Director

PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF
MUNICIPAL RESEARCH TO THE BOARD OF
ESTIMATE AND APPORTIONMENT FOR
CONSIDERATION BEFORE PASS-
ING THE BUDGET OF 1909

Before passing the budget for 1909, the Bureau of Municipal Research respectfully asks the Board of Estimate and Apportionment to consider the following conditions and proposals :

I With Reference to Payrolls

During the year 1907, the City of New York expended over \$70,000,000 in salaries and wages for operation and maintenance—that is exclusive of the amounts spent on construction and other forms of permanent improvements. During the year 1908, the amount expended for similar purposes will approximate \$80,000,000. These vast sums are being paid out of the city treasury with practically no evidence of the justice or accuracy of payroll claims and practically without audit. For the year 1909, the board of estimate and apportionment is asked to appropriate an amount exceeding \$100,000,000 for salaries and wages. These requests are made without adequate record as to the work or service performed; without any one being able to determine the true amount or character of service rendered. In passing the budget for 1909, it is proposed that the board shall give notice to all departments in the city that the estimates of the subsequent year must be based on the following records :

- 1 Daily time reports or time tickets, showing the character, quantity or extent of work performed in sufficient detail to provide data for cost and expense records. These time reports and time tickets shall be signed and certified as to correctness by each employee working in an office or not working in a gang, and verified and countersigned by the person in charge. Daily time sheets of all persons working in gangs shall be signed and certified as to correctness by the foreman.

- 2 Time records to be kept in the departmental accounting office, which shall be posted from the daily time sheets or tickets and from which the payrolls shall be prepared.
- 3 Payrolls prepared by the person charged with keeping such time records. These payrolls to be certified by such person that the statements of time thereon agree with the time records, and that such records are fully supported by time sheets or time tickets which are duly signed and certified as to the correctness thereof.

II With Reference to Supplies and Materials

During the year 1907, the City of New York expended over \$56,000,000 for operation and maintenance, exclusive of payrolls and exclusive of amounts properly chargeable to permanent improvements. While no analysis of this sum is shown on the books of the city, it has been estimated that not less than 25 per cent. or approximately \$15,000,000 were spent for supplies and materials. The city is a cash customer; it buys in larger quantities than most private consumers; it should, therefore, be able to obtain the benefit of wholesale prices with both trade and cash discounts. On account of the methods employed in making purchases and in making settlements therefor, it usually pays higher prices than any one else in the market, frequently receives inferior goods and short deliveries, and does not avail itself of either trade discounts or cash discounts. In the estimate of 1909 a much larger sum is asked for supplies and materials. Before passing the budget for this year it is proposed :

- 1 That the board shall appoint a committee to report not later than November 1st, an estimate by departments of the amount of supplies and materials required for 1909, and in making such estimates to take into account :
 - a The amount actually spent by departments for supplies and materials during the year 1907.
 - b The amount of probable expenditure by departments for supplies and materials during the year 1908.
 - c The amount of probable saving by departments for each of these years which would have been made by the city if it had availed itself of both trade and cash discounts.
 - d The additional amount of probable saving by departments for each of these years which the city would

have made if it had established well-defined and well-known trade standards to be used as specifications in proposals, for bids, as specifications in contracts, as a basis for inspections and deliveries, and as a basis for determining and auditing prices.

- e The added amount of probable saving by departments for each of these years which the city would have made if it had had an effective means of determining prices current, and had passed on the fairness and justness of all bids before contracts were let ; on the realness of all competitions for contracts ; on the justness of all discounts offered or contracted for ; on the fairness and justness of all claims presented for payment under open market orders.
- f The added probable saving, by departments, to the city if there had existed an adequate, central inspection staff, so equipped and organized that it could be held responsible for certification as to the quantity and quality of goods delivered under contracts and open market orders, and which could also hold responsible the several storekeepers and other persons who certified as to the quality and quantity received.
- 2 That this committee consider and report on or before November 15th definite trade specifications for as many articles, to be purchased during the year 1909, as time will permit.
- 3 That in passing the budget for 1909, the board shall establish as a condition under which appropriations for supplies and materials may be expended, that all supplies and materials estimated to be needed by any of the several departments in 1909 in amounts in excess of \$1,000 shall be contracted for, and in all other cases where practicable, bids be obtained before the issue of open market orders ; that all proposals for bids be based on standard and well-known trade specifications, that this committee be continued to represent the board in determining whether such condition has been complied with before the proposals for bids are advertised and before the contracts are certified by the comptroller ; that the board require that, so far as practicable, similar specifications be used to describe similar

classes of supplies and materials in the contracts of the several departments.

- 4 That the board establish and advertise in the City Record, as a condition under which the appropriations for supplies and materials for 1909 may be expended, that proposals for all bids and all contracts be made upon the basis of trade and cash discounts; that provision for trade and cash discounts be specifically set forth in all contracts approved as to form by the corporation counsel and certified by the comptroller; that the quotations of trade discounts to the city, in bids and in contracts, be based on payment within thirty and sixty days after goods are delivered and invoices are rendered, or within thirty and sixty days after the last day of the month during which goods are delivered and invoices are rendered in case of regular deliveries under contract; that cash discounts be based on payment within ten days after the delivery of goods with invoices attached, or within ten days after the end of the month during which goods are delivered with invoices attached in case of regular deliveries under contracts.
- 5 That the board request that prior to January 1st, 1909, the comptroller shall promulgate a uniform procedure for making requisitions, for ordering supplies and materials, for invoicing goods on delivery, for making effective inspection, for certifying as to the quality and quantity of goods received, for certifying as to the quality and quantity of goods inspected, for preparing and certifying as to the correctness of payroll, contract, open market order, and other claims vouched in the departments, and for recording orders, invoices, payrolls and vouchers in such registers and accounts as are needed to inform the board with respect to the conditions and purposes of expenditures.

III With Reference to Repairs and Replacements

The cost of repairs and replacements in the city is a very large item of expense, especially in such departments as docks and ferries, water, fire, police, and such bureaus as sewers, highways, and public buildings under the jurisdiction of the borough presidents. Any attempt to determine the adequacy or inadequacy of estimates

and appropriations for maintenance, should be based on actual cost of maintenance and engineering experience in order that the wear and tear and depreciation of one year may not be deferred to be met out of the tax levies of the subsequent year, or that the provisions made or to be made in the budget of a particular year for such purpose may not be excessive.

To this end, it is proposed that the board of estimate and apportionment appoint a committee of engineers to determine and so far as practicable, to report on or before November 1st, proper allowances per lineal mile or square yard for each of the several classes of highway, paved or unpaved, maintained by the presidents of the several boroughs. In determining such allowance the actual past cost, if ascertainable, of maintaining the several classes of highway in each of the boroughs shall be taken into consideration, but the estimate of probable cost in 1909 shall be as nearly as may be a true estimate of the probable actual cost. It is suggested that there be allowed to the several boroughs appropriations based on the estimated unit cost of maintenance, and that the present condition of the pavements in the several boroughs not under guarantee of maintenance as well as the probable necessary repairs in the year 1909 be taken into consideration in determining the amounts of such appropriations.

It is further suggested that a similar committee of engineers be constituted to determine and report upon rates of depreciation to be provided against in maintaining the several classes of permanent properties and improvements, including equipment and apparatus, street paving, sewers, water mains, etc., etc., for the year 1909, and that a standing committee be constituted to report annually on the physical condition of the properties which are to be maintained in the several departments of the city; that this committee shall, so far as possible, prepare standards of specifications for building and structural materials and equipment, and report them to the committee or bureau charged with establishing standards.

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